
ATLANTA HOUSING ANNOUNCES THE OPENING OF THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD MICROGRANT 6.0 PROGRAM WITH AWARDS UP TO \$6,000.00 PER ELIGIBLE APPLICANT. A TOTAL OF \$70,000.00 IN FUNDING IS AVAILABLE WITH AN APPLICATION DEADLINE OF April 30, 2021.

THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS IMPLEMENTATION GRANT OVERVIEW

The Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant (“CNIG”) is a grant funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support communities that have undergone a comprehensive local planning process and created a Neighborhood Transformation Plan (“NTP”) to revitalize a severely distressed public housing site and to redevelop the surrounding neighborhood(s). In November 2014, HUD issued a request for applications under the FY2014 CNIG program, with grant awards up to \$30M. The Atlanta Housing Authority (“AH”) applied as the Lead Applicant with the City of Atlanta (“COA”) as the Co-Applicant. Atlanta received a \$30M grant on September 28, 2015. The focus area of the CNIG is the revitalization of the former University Homes public housing complex and the surrounding neighborhoods of Ashview Heights, the Atlanta University Center Neighborhood and Vine City, collectively known as the University Choice Neighborhood (“UCN”). The \$30M in grant funding will leverage over \$400M in other public, private and philanthropic commitments from AH, the COA, Invest Atlanta and other public and private stakeholder organizations.

PREVIOUS MICROGRANTS AWARDED

The University Choice Neighborhood (now known as Choice Atlanta) MicroGrant Program launched in the summer of 2012 under the 2010 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant received by AH to develop the NTP. This initial MicroGrant program provided funding to nine (9) MicroGrant projects with awards between \$500.00 - \$3,000.00 to support human development and education activities in the UCN. A second round of funding was approved in 2013 that awarded 11 MicroGrants in the amounts ranging \$500.00 - \$3,000.00 and expanding the categories to the items listed below. MicroGrant 3.0 launched in October 2016 and awarded 11 recipients in amounts ranging from \$2,500.00- \$5,000.00; and eight (8) recipients received amounts ranging from \$2,500.00 - \$5,000.00 during the MicroGrant 4.0 funding cycle in 2017. The 5.0 program cycle saw its largest cohort – 14 awardees were granted \$50,800. Since its inception, AH has awarded 53 recipients \$180,061.00 in MicroGrants to benefit the neighborhoods of Ashview Heights, Atlanta University Center, and Vine City.

MICROGRANT PROGRAM BOUNDARIES

A map is included in this document illustrating the UCN area bounded by the following streets: (North) Joseph E. Boone Blvd; (East) Northside Drive; (South) Interstate 20; (West) portion of the Atlanta Beltline to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive; across to Joseph E. Lowery Blvd., and up Lowery to Boone Blvd.

MICROGRANT 6.0 PROGRAM

The UCN MicroGrant 6.0 program has added a few new categories and will continue the mission to build upon community efforts to improve the physical, social, and economic outcomes of the UCN area, consistent with the NTP and the CNIG, and specifically will support capacity building, crisis management, urban farming/community gardens, healthy living, early childhood development, financial empowerment/higher education, arts, and small business development. This year, like last, there will also be a focus on innovation, long-term sustainability, impact on former University Homes residents (FUH), and a continued focus on Section 3 applicants and specific activities that support our food ecosystem in the UCN.

1. Eligible Applicant Requirements:

Businesses, non-profit organizations or civic groups (“the Applicant”) are eligible to apply. While individuals are not eligible Applicants, AH strongly encourages interested individuals to collaborate with a sponsoring Applicant Organization with demonstrated similar alignment. Likewise, organizations with similar alignment and missions are eligible to apply under a teaming arrangement for a maximum award of \$6,000.00. Under these arrangements, one organization must serve as the lead applicant and will be ultimately responsible for all compliance requirements.

Members of the Applicant Organization applying for Category 1 (as described in Sect. 2) funds **must** live within the boundaries of the UCN area. Applicants for the remaining funding categories do not have to be physically located within the UCN geography, but must demonstrate history of working in the UCN and the project **must** benefit the former UH residents and/or UCN current residents. All project activities **must** be located within the UCN boundaries.

UCN residents are persons living within a household with an address in the Vine City, Ashview Heights or Atlanta University Center neighborhoods (“UCN address”). UCN businesses must have a UCN address or serve UCN residents. The FUH residents are those household residents who resided in University Homes at the time of relocation prior to the demolition of the project. The majority of the former residents currently reside throughout the Atlanta metropolitan area.

As part of the application process, each Applicant **must** first register or update its profile as an AH vendor by visiting AH’s website at www.atlantahousing.org. Once at the AH website, applicants should:

- hover over (do not click) the “Doing Business” tab on the top right horizontal menu;
- click “Vendors”;
- scroll down and click on “Register as a Supplier/Vendor” **or** “Update Supplier/Vendor Profile”;
- insert email address;
- click “Next”;
- click “Next” again; then
- complete form

The vendor approval process may take several days, so we strongly suggest that you apply for your vendor number several days prior to application submittal deadline. The AH Vendor Number **must** be on the MicroGrant Application for consideration. If you are applying for Section 3 bonus points, you **must** complete the AH Section 3 Certification Form and be registered as a Section 3 business with AH when you complete/update your vendor information. Should applicants have questions during the vendor registration/updating process, please reach out to Aria Ramos at aria.ramos@atlantahousing.org for assistance.

2. Categories:

The following is a list of categories for projects as part of the Choice Atlanta MicroGrant 6.0 Program. These categories support the furtherance of the goals and strategies of the NTP and CNIG. Applicants may only apply for one category of funding. In the application, the proposals must describe how the selected category supports the organization’s mission, goals, innovation, sustainability, and/or food ecosystem efforts in the UCN.

- **Category 1 – Applicant Organization Capacity Building:** Funding may be considered for up to two (2) Applicant organization members who are FUH residents or reside in the UCN to participate in an established training and/or technical assistance program that supports business development or organization capacity building. Applicants will need to identify a program of interest and provide details of a planned program. MicroGrant funds will cover the payment for classes (no travel or per diem costs). Examples of established local programs include the Georgia Center for Nonprofits' Nonprofit University (www.gcn.org), Georgia Small Business Development Center (www.georgiasbdc.org), Atlanta University Center Consortium's Comm University (www.aucenter.edu), or nonprofit/business development programs or certifications through an institution of higher education.
- **Category 2 – Crisis Management:** An applicant or organization can construct strategies designed to help deal with and seek to manage damage in the case of a sudden and significant negative event.
- **Category 3 – Urban Farming/Community Gardens:** Projects to improve the availability of healthy food and produce for FUH residents or current UCN residents.

Urban Farming Opportunities:

1. **Community Outreach and Resource Mapping:** Outreach to Choice Neighborhood residents to identify those who may participate in the Urban Agriculture ecosystem as a grower, in aggregation and distribution, with food and meal preparation, marketing, retail, composting, and as an interested consumer. This will assist AH in making sound decisions on where and how to install additional food ecosystem infrastructure.
 2. **Production:** AH desires the creation of a community garden on an AH-affiliated parcel of land within the UCN boundaries. AH seeks a team, experienced in urban agriculture, to help build the garden, help organize a “garden club” of residents linked to the selected site, and help pave the way to sustainability with the first few harvests. We are particularly interested in neighborhood growers who have already gone through an urban agriculture training program and has a demonstrated record in successful urban agriculture.
 3. **Pollinator Program:** Pollinators are essential to a healthy food ecosystem, pollinating roughly 75% of crops. There is increasing evidence that pollinators are on the decline and that the stresses of urban environments are a contributing factor. The MicroGrant program will help support pollinators and the entire food ecosystem by considering grants that include the creation of beehives and pollinator gardens within the Choice Neighborhood.
- **Category 4 – Healthy Living:** Healthy living projects created in the UCN community that will lead to improved physical or mental health and increase the well-being of former UH residents and/or current UCN residents.

- **Category 5 – Early Childhood Development:** Projects to be implemented by organizations that are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) that measure against the United Way of Greater Atlanta’s Child Well-Being Index and address the academic, social-emotional, and physical development of FUH residents and/or current UCN residents.
- **Category 6 – Youth Empowerment and Higher Education:** The balance between economic stability and emotional well-being. It is about understanding how decisions affect one’s own financial bottom line. This subject needs to be taught early on. It is, as important for teens, as it is for young adults. Improving a person’s feeling of empowerment is more about helping them to understand how much control they have in their financial lives and how education can be the key to attaining financial freedom.
- **Category 7 – Arts:** Projects focused on the development of and exposure to various art forms as a way of building esteem, creating a sense of place, and uplifting the community.
- **Category 8 – Small Business Development:** Marketing, financing and business related assistance to local entrepreneurs to foster small business and jobs by providing educational resources to business owners and those looking to start a business.

3. Prior MicroGrant Awardees:

Organizations that have been previously awarded a Choice Atlanta MicroGrant, and were in good standing at grant cycle close-out, are eligible to apply for any category under this 6.0 round; however, prior MicroGrantees that have received **more than one** MicroGrant from previous rounds **are not eligible** to apply. Prior awardees must describe in their proposal how the prior project was impactful and sustainable. If you are a former applicant and have questions regarding your status, please contact Angela Benjamin by email at MicroGrant@atlantahousing.org.

4. MicroGrant Scoring Criteria and Evaluation:

The Selection Committee will include representatives from AH/Choice Atlanta staff and stakeholders from the UCN community. No member of the Selection Committee can be a member of an Applicant Organization, related to a principal of the Applicant Organization, or have other conflicts of interest.

Scoring of proposals are as follows, based solely on information presented in the application:

EVALUATION AND SCORING CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS
Threshold Requirements: Completed Application, typed, signed, and delivered by deadline with all applicable attachments; Vendor Registration completed, Information Session Attended.	Pass/Fail (no points for this section)
Project Evaluation/Organizational Capacity: Capacity of Applicant Organization and its Members (Does the applicant, organization, and its members have the capacity to produce the project deliverable?)	Total Points = 0 - 20
Schedule/Work Plan: Are the responsible parties and assigned tasks listed on the schedule (work plan) appropriate to perform the proposed activities? Is the schedule/work plan inclusive of all necessary activities and realistic to accomplish the project?	Total Points = 0 - 20
Funding/Budget: Is the budget for this project an accurate, itemized, and realistic reflection of the budget narrative? Is the budget inclusive of all project work activities and realistic to accomplish the project?	Total Points = 0 - 20
Project Sustainability: Does the applicant demonstrate the ability to sustain the project beyond the MicroGrant funding? Is there a viable plan to secure future resources or other available funds to provide continued services?	Total Points = 0 - 15
Community and Resident Engagement: What impact will this proposal have on the residents and community stakeholders in the UCN?	Total Points = 0 - 15
Project Innovation: Does this need/service project have innovative or creative services that serve the UCN residents with an identified need/service that is not currently being provided in the UCN?	Total Points = 0 - 10
	MAXIMUM POINTS: 100

Bonus points given to Applicants that meet one or more of the following criteria:

BONUS POINTS - EVALUATION AND SCORING CRITERIA (not required for funding approval)	MAXIMUM POINTS
<p>Urban Farming/Community Gardens: (Category 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Community Outreach and Resource Mapping B. Food Production C. Pollinator Program 	<p>Total Points = 10</p>
<p>Impact on Former University Homes (FUH) Residents: Provision of direct services, outreach to encourage participation in the UCN case management services in the areas of health, education or workforce development and/or help create the desire for former residents to return to the new community known as Scholars Landing. Include outreach plan for residents that do not live in the UCN.</p>	<p>Total Points = 0 - 10</p>
<p>Partnerships, Collaboration and Volunteer Opportunities: Has the applicant secured partners within the UCN to achieve the deliverable? Has the applicant been an active and involved presence in the community?</p>	<p>Total Points = 0 - 5</p>
<p>Leveraged Funds/Services: The applicant has secured additional funds in either financial and/or in-kind support for this project. Funds and uses are demonstrated in the comprehensive budget.</p>	<p>Total Points = 0 - 5</p>
<p>Section 3 Businesses: The applicant completed the AH Section 3 Certification Form, and identified as a Section 3 Business on the approved AH Vendor Application.</p>	<p>Total Points = 5</p>

5. Grant Amount:

The maximum grant award is \$6,000.00 and the total amount of grant funds available for this round is \$70,000. Grant awards and amounts will be based on the number and quality of proposals received and amounts requested.

- 6. Mandatory Attendance at Information Session:** Choice Atlanta staff will be conducting two Mandatory MicroGrant 6.0 Informational Sessions – **conducted online via Zoom. Attendance at one of the two meetings is mandatory** for the Applicant, as documented by the online EventBrite registration. You can register online at www.cnatlanta.org or www.atlantahousing.org.

7. MicroGrant 6.0 Schedule:

03/01/21	MicroGrant Application Released
03/17/21	Mandatory Information Session I
03/24/21	Mandatory Information Session II
03/31/21	Technical Assistance Session
04/09/21	AH Vendor Registration Deadline
04/30/21	MicroGrant Application Deadline
06/30/21	Awards Announcement
11/12/21	Projects Complete / Grants Close-out / Final Reports Due

8. Payment Schedule:

Within **30 days** of MicroGrant Agreement execution, **30% of the grant funds** are distributed. Within **45 days** of the award, the Choice Atlanta team will conduct Applicant site visits or Applicant will meet with Choice Atlanta staff to review progress of implementation based on the detailed schedule in the MicroGrant Agreement. If sufficient progress is accomplished, an additional **30% of the funds** will be released within **7 days** of the visit/meeting. **Thirty days** after second installment, the Choice Atlanta team will conduct 2nd Applicant site visits or Applicant will meet with Choice Atlanta staff to review progress of implementation based on the detailed schedule in the MicroGrant Agreement. If sufficient progress is accomplished, an additional **30% of the funds** will be released based on the schedule submitted, the progress made toward achieving the project goal, activities and deliverables, as verified by Choice Atlanta staff. **All awardees must complete their projects and submit their final supporting documentation and reports to AH by November 12, 2021 to receive the remaining 10% of their grant funds. If compliant, Applicants will receive funds within ten business days. Failure to do so may result in automatic elimination for consideration of future MicroGrant opportunities.** Note: the timing for release of funds is at the sole discretion of the Choice Atlanta staff based upon a review of performance and progress toward program goals. **Applicant Organizations must provide proof of business bank account, into which grant funds can be wired.**

9. Matching Funds, In-kind Donations and Leverage: No matching funds are required. However, the inclusion of in-kind services and funding commitments from the Applicant Organization or partners are strongly encouraged to demonstrate collaboration and sustainability. Budgets are reviewed, and consideration given to projects that will survive regardless of MicroGrant funding.

10. Ineligible Projects/Activities:

MicroGrant funds are not available for the following:

- Funds to support an endowment
- Fundraising Events
- Capital Campaign Contributions
- Debt or expenses incurred prior to the date of the execution of the MicroGrant Agreement.
- On-going operational expenses of an Applicant Organization (rent, utility, etc.) including salaries to run the organization in its daily operation.

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- Projects that **do not** demonstrate a direct linkage or benefit to UCN area, residents, or FUH residents.
 - MicroGrant Awardees that have received more than one MicroGrant in previous rounds.

11. Additional Information:

- Only one application per organization is accepted. Applicants that own/operate multiple organizations can only submit one application.
- Applications must be typed or prepared via computer on the fillable form that is available for download on the Choice Atlanta website at www.cnatlanta.org or on the AH website at www.atlantahousing.org.
- Please be sure your application contains all required information. Incomplete applications/information may disqualify your application from funding consideration. Refer to the checklist included with the application.
- A representative from AH will notify awardees.
- 10 bonus points are given to applicants addressing the need for **Urban Farming Opportunities** (Category 3):
 1. Community Outreach/Resource Mapping
 2. Food Production
 3. Pollinator Program
- Additional Bonus Point opportunities are also available. Refer to Bonus Point Scoring for details.
- **SAVE Affidavit:** All Applicant Organizations must verify their status by completing and submitting a SAVE Affidavit. Please find attached the affidavit that can be completed online and printed. This document **MUST** be included with the application packet.
- **Technical Assistance:** In an effort to better assist Applicant Organizations in their quest to submit strong applications, AH will host a Technical Assistance Session. The session will be held on **Wednesday, March 31, 2021 6:00pm – 7:30pm** via online Zoom session. While the session is not mandatory, all Applicant Organizations are encouraged to attend.

12. Application Deadline:

The application deadline is **Friday, April 30, 2020 at 5:00p.m.** Provided is the application template for submission. It must be filled out in its entirety including a detailed budget and schedule. Applications can be mailed or submitted electronically. If you are mailing your application, ensure ample time for the receipt of the application by the deadline. The Selection Committee will not consider applications received after the deadline date and time.

Email applications to MicroGrant@atlantahousing.org, or submit online at www.cnatlanta.org or www.atlantahousing.org

MicroGrant 6.0 Contact Information:

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University Choice Neighborhood Boundary Map: Ashview Heights, Atlanta University Center & Vine City

